

BUILDING BETTER STRATEGISTS

BY

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USAWC CLASS OF 2008

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Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 15 MAR 2008	2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2007 to 00-00-2008			
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Building Better Strategists		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER			
		5b. GRANT NUMBER			
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER			
6. AUTHOR(S) Pollyanna Montgomery		5d. PROJECT NUMBER			
		5e. TASK NUMBER			
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER			
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)			
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)			
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 28	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle State Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Pollyanna Montgomery
TITLE: Building Better Strategists
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project
DATE: 18 March 2008 WORD COUNT: 5,463 PAGES: 28
KEY TERMS: Inter-Agency, Career Development, Cultural and Language Training, Professional Military Education, Military Career Lengths
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

In 1957, Samuel Huntington defined the peculiar skill of the military officer as “...the management of violence not the act of violence itself.” His dictum holds true today and is made all the more complicated by the wide spectrum of military operations from peace to war and beyond. This environment requires military leaders that can assess and understand the environment in order to create effective strategies incorporating all elements of national power. To do so, officers must not only be able to develop strategies, they must be able to communicate them to civilian policymakers and interagency partners around the globe, with an understanding of the strategic cultures involved. Toward this end, the Services must institute language and cultural training, develop more robust, nearly continuous Professional Military Education (PME), and expand opportunities for military members to serve with other Services and civilian agencies. These efforts will demand more time and dedication the mainstream officer. The investments described in this paper will improve the military’s ability to develop coherent strategies in peace and conflict while improving its agility in integrating the

capabilities of all armed forces and interagency partners in order to achieve the desired effects of United States policymakers.

BUILDING BETTER STRATEGISTS

Today's operational environment demands a military capable of handling operations along the continuum of conflict, from peace to war. The military's role is not simply about the application of force. It is about the range of operations from the coercive use of force to the reestablishment of societies after war has occurred. It is about knowing and understanding the operational environment in order to develop strategies that see beyond the defeat of an enemy. It is about communicating strategic concepts to military and civilian leaders in order to harmonize all the elements of national power to achieve policy objectives and advance the nation's interests. In 1957, Samuel Huntington stated in his classic work *The Soldier and the State*, "It must be remembered that the peculiar skill of the officer is the management of violence not the act of violence itself."¹ His words ring true today and perhaps more so than ever. Recognizing the need for this skill is the first step. The next step is the subject of this paper. It will examine how the United States military develops leaders capable of understanding the cultural environments in which they will operate, at home and abroad,, how it educates leaders capable of developing military strategies to manage the violence within those environments as well as promoting peace, and how it can improve the capability of military leaders to communicate strategic ends to civilian leaders as well as their interagency partners.

The ongoing conflict in Iraq serves as a fitting example for the United States Government as a whole and the military in particular regarding the skills necessary to conduct effective military operations from planning to post-conflict as well as peacetime missions. An increasingly interdependent world belies the logic of military actions based

solely for the purpose of destroying an enemy. This fact magnifies—and some would argue changes—the capabilities required for today’s military leaders. In order to be most effective, the U.S. military must educate its leaders on the environment through language and cultural training, demand more robust Professional Military Education (PME) to broaden the knowledge base of military members continuously, and expand opportunities for military members to serve with other Services and civilian agencies. It is the premise of this paper that these efforts will improve the U.S. military’s ability to develop coherent strategies in peace and conflict while improving its agility in integrating the capabilities of all armed forces and interagency partners in order to achieve the desired effects of United States policymakers.

Know the Enemy

More than two thousand years ago, the Chinese military theorist Sun Tzu said, “Know the enemy, know yourself; your victory will never be endangered.”² This principle holds true today regardless of the level of war considered. Force shaping operations necessitate an understanding of the culture and traditions of the people the military intends to influence. In force application, an understanding of the way an enemy or potential adversary thinks and what motivates that enemy can have significant consequences for the outcome of a military engagement. One of the most productive ways of understanding a culture is to learn its language and by doing so, gain insight into its traditions and norms. Given this precept, the military should build robust language and cultural education programs for military leaders. An early introduction to languages and cultures enhance an officer’s ability to operate in a variety of foreign environments. As Ralph Peters observes, “Language skills and cultural grasp that foster

adroit (and swift) evaluations of the multi-dimensional conflict environment comprise, in military jargon, a major combat multiplier. Wars are won by officers who know the smell of the streets.”³ Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld agreed with this principle and approved a plan in 2005 to improve language resources in as well as those available to the U.S. military. The improvements seek to develop the language skills of the officer corps in general and to consider language ability as a factor in the promotion of general officers to more senior leadership positions.⁴ With Rumsfeld’s departure, robust enforcement of the program is in question. In keeping there have been efforts to increase language training at the Service academies, but is this initiative sufficient enough to have a career-long impact?

At West Point, all cadets regardless of their academic major are now required to take a minimum of two semesters of language and four semesters are required for non-technical majors. At the US Air Force Academy, the length of required language study has grown to two years for non-technical majors and four years for cadets majoring in language. At both schools, the opportunity to study abroad has also grown substantially.⁵ West Point reports that fifteen percent of the cadet corps will study abroad some time during their four-year tour. The Naval Academy lags far behind the other two academies and has just recently instituted a foreign areas studies program in its curriculum although foreign language classes at Annapolis remain voluntary.⁶ In addition, there is no language requirement for the sixty percent of officers who earn their commission through Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Officer Training School or other officer training programs every year.⁷ Although, cadets gaining their commission through ROTC have the opportunity to study foreign languages offered at their particular

institutions, language studies is not yet mandatory except under provisions applicable to certain types of ROTC scholarships.

Still, advances at West Point and the Air Force Academy are positive signs of a military educational system willing to respond to the changing needs of the profession. Language skills and cultural education are not, however, just for the military. Ideally, presidential initiatives for instituting mandatory language programs in both primary and secondary schools will go a long way toward raising the cultural intelligence quotient of the US populace as a whole and the military specifically. Today less than twenty-four percent of public primary and secondary schools offer their students the opportunity to study a foreign language and of those twenty-four percent, seventy-nine percent are taught at only an introductory level.⁸ The numbers are bleaker for higher education where less than eight percent of all college students take any foreign language training at all.⁹ In an effort to reverse the trend of cultural and language arts illiteracy, President George W. Bush pledged \$144 million in 2006 to institute language programs from kindergarten to graduate school. Maintaining funding for this program and aggressive oversight of its implementation by the Department of Education could contribute immensely toward establishing a solid language and cultural base in our populace with the military subsequently reaping the benefit. Officials from the US Department of Education agree, "Offering language courses from kindergarten onwards will develop a pool of citizens, diplomats, and military personnel; who are not only fluent in the languages, but knowledgeable about the countries and cultures where they are spoken."¹⁰

Unfortunately, the military cannot passively await the outcomes of the educational reforms proposed by President Bush. Fluency in a foreign language need not be the goal of the military. Rather, a working knowledge of at least one foreign language coupled with an in-depth understanding of the culture gained through study of a language could satisfy the needs of the military. Although both objectives are desirable, cultural understanding outweighs a requirement to read, write and fluently speak a foreign language since understanding the culture enables a service member to better understand how others think and, in turn, how to best influence that thinking whether it is for the purpose of combat operations or providing advice to a policymaker. Leading the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Fifth Corps Commander Lieutenant General William S. Wallace remarked, "We had a very superficial understanding of the society and we didn't understand the implications of a tribal society."¹¹ Wallace admitted these deficiencies led to misguided strategies. Now a four-star general and the commander of the US Army's Training and Doctrine Command, General Wallace has specific ideas about how to avoid this mistake in the future, "It all starts with culture. I'm not suggesting everyone needs to be a language expert. We need a cadre of experts, but we also need to ensure everyone has an instructional base in order to best understand the operational environment."¹²

By better understanding cultures, the military can more effectively shape environments before, during, and after hostilities. Understanding cultures can help the military understand what motivates an enemy to fight or surrender and, in post conflict, can help those developing strategies to understand how a populace will react to certain measures. As US Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni succinctly stated, "We must

know how the involved parties think. We cannot impose our cultural values on people with their own culture.”¹³ Recognizing a deficiency in this ability, the US Army began deploying human terrain teams into Iraq in 2007. Army leadership is optimistic that the use of these teams will improve the Army’s ability to understand how the Iraqi people think and react. The teams generally consist of five regional studies experts and social scientists headed by civilian anthropologists.¹⁴ The main purpose of the team is to advise unit commanders about the relationships, social connections, and cultural practices of the Iraqi people.¹⁵ This cultural understanding is critical to forging alliances and assessing intelligence. As one brigade commander serving in Iraq stated, “How do I make [Iraqis] realize that I’m thinking what they’re thinking? How do I approach them in a way that helps? How do I get into the clique? How can I win the information campaign using the way they think?”¹⁶ The human terrain teams can help, but the military needs to develop an adequate level of cultural understanding in their “mainstream” officers to limit the requirement for civilian-staffed advisory teams.

All of the Services currently employ limited language and culturally based pre-deployment training. The US Marine Corps’ pre-deployment cultural awareness program is essentially familiarization training focusing on customs and habits of the Iraqi people. Critics of the Marine Corps’ program claim the briefings are, “Mixed in amongst shot calls and safety briefs, wills, powers of attorney, and normal combat/military occupational specialty training.... Aside from these standard briefs the Marine Corps doesn’t provide its officers any additional training on the cultural dynamics of the country where they are deploying.”¹⁷ Although most agree the training is better than nothing, the “just-in-time” limited training falls well short of what is required to understand the way

another culture operates or what is needed to develop a strategy that will affect people's behavior. Much like language training, cultural education must start early and be reemphasized often in an officer's career if it is to have a significant impact. It must be stressed that cultural training should cover a variety of cultures and avoid the tendency to "fight the last war" by focusing on particularities of the people of countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. As the acclaimed sociologist and political scientist Seymour Martin Lipset often remarked, "[Someone] who knows only one country knows no country."¹⁸ Just how important is it to have a cultural knowledge base before entering the combat zone? One former brigade commander put it soberly, "I was not prepared for the environment I went into. I made decisions—bad decisions—that may have cost soldiers their lives because I did not understand the enemy we were dealing with."¹⁹ One method to ensure wide-ranging exposure to both language and cultural education is to restructure and refocus the PME system of the Services.

Lifelong Learning

In a recent article, US Army General David Petraeus said, "The most powerful tool in any soldier carries is not his weapon but his mind."²⁰ In the military, there is substantial reliance on experience for most of the military officer's learning, but that learning takes valuable time. Most military members will spend less than three years in in-residence PME programs during their career. To further augment experienced-based learning and limited in-residence PME programs, the military should institute nearly continuous participation in non-residence PME while retaining the current in-residence PME opportunities. The logic of this approach is strengthened by the simple fact that today's PME system alone is insufficient to develop and educate senior leaders for the

challenges they will face in the remainder of their career. Thus, the military should take advantage of civilian institutions that offer applicable distance education programs. Current technology makes the establishment of a continuous PME program more practical than ever.

Although some military leaders will argue over what the PME institutions should teach, few argue whether the institutions teach enough. Former US Army War College instructors Colonel Jeffrey McCausland and Colonel Gregg Martin underscored this point. “Integrated into officer development we also need a more holistic educational approach that imbues a notion of ‘lifelong learning’ to the profession.”²¹ A lifelong PME system would allow the Services to design rank-specific programs that balance necessary warfighting skills with a broader exploration of pertinent topics to include language and cultural studies. Further, the program could be managed by the current education and training commands of the respective Services and fill the periods between in-residence PME. The content and quantity of the program, however, must be judiciously monitored to ensure the officers maintain their primary combat skills while expanding their understanding of such topics as economics, history, and politics in addition to the language and cultural studies previously mentioned. The program should not be designed to produce experts, but be geared toward education that will better equip military leaders to understand and influence the political and cultural complexities they encounter today and in the future strategic environment. A deeper understanding of these complexities will increase the officer’s ability to translate appropriate military capabilities to civilian policymakers and improve the military’s ability to conduct effective military operations abroad.

Since a great deal of expertise on the topics listed above exists in civilian institutions, the military should take full advantage of applicable non-residence programs offered by civilian institutions. In this way, officers will not only learn new perspectives and be challenged by a new way of thinking, they will interact—albeit electronically—with civilian professors and civilian students participating in the courses. General Petraeus drew attention to this point, “The benefits of civilian education are substantial, and I have been and remain a strong proponent of such opportunities for officers.”²² Military-specific on-line courses should be included in the program consistent with the needs of the Armed Forces. The current in-residence PME and civilian exchange PME programs should be maintained since interpersonal interaction and the time set aside to attend these courses is a more conducive means of advancing an officer’s professional development.

The idea of using distance learning to enhance professional development is not new. As early as 1995, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reported on the possibility of expanding opportunities for on-line learning. Their report titled, *A Strategic Vision for the Professional Military Education of Officers in the Twenty-First Century*, highlighted the opportunities: “In the future, technologies should place PME within the reach of all officers.... As these technologies mature, studies will be needed to determine whether the present residency format remains valid.”²³ Today universities use web cams, chat rooms, mandatory electronic collaboration between students, teleconferencing, and video teleconferencing to improve the learning experience.²⁴ Aside from the benefits of civilian on-line opportunities and the increasing realism of on-line learning, electronic education is more cost effective for an already fiscally constrained military. In addition,

the curriculum can be rapidly changed and adapted to the needs of the Services.²⁵ Most importantly, on-line education is more convenient for the officers whose daily schedule is demanding and who must fulfill numerous professional requirements to be successful. On-line programs must be focused on specific learning objectives to expand an officer's knowledge base without overwhelming Service members them. Some programs may consist of little more than professional reading or country briefs, but the programs will help ensure a common exposure to a variety of topics while augmenting in-residence education. The Services should maintain the goal of implementing on-line programs designed to enhance their knowledge and professional development.

No Substitute For "Being There"

Air Force General Ronald Fogleman was the first Service Chief of Staff to introduce a professional reading list in order to cultivate lifelong learning in Air Force personnel. His literary recommendations for senior leaders included works focusing on strategy and policy development both within the military and between the military and civilian leaders.²⁶ Today's technology enables the US military to go one step beyond his objective by designing programs that fill the gaps between year-long in-residence PME programs, but they should not be substituted for in-residence PME or attendance at civilian institutions for advanced degrees. Both Generals Petraeus and Fogleman earned advanced degrees from civilian institutions and both endorse continuing the opportunity. General Petraeus pointed out that civilian institutions take officers out of their "intellectual comfort zones," and General Fogleman echoed this thinking when he said simply, "Civilian education? More of it!"²⁷ In addition, General Fogleman highlighted the importance of military members attending the "right" institutions. By this term, he

meant that officers have a much greater opportunity to meet and collaborate with future civilian policymakers if they attended schools with curriculum attracting future leaders. Not slighting the educational opportunities at other universities, he stated plainly that a person is more likely to meet a future civilian leader at a school such as George Washington University or Harvard University than they would at a university better known for its scientific or technical education. Expanding opportunities for officers to attend these institutions is critical since the goal of continuing education is not simply to broaden the intellectual capacity of officers, but to increase their understanding of how national security policy is developed and implemented in order for to become more effective strategists and policy advisors.

Reaping the Reward

In a recent lecture, the current commandant of the US Army War College said that part of the military's job is to "...help policymakers understand the operational environment."²⁸ He went on to explain that in order to do this the military must first understand the environment themselves and then be able to effectively articulate strategies developed based on that interpretation to policy makers that may have very little knowledge of the environment or the military capabilities. This means that broadening officers' knowledge base is only half the battle. Military strategy today must consider all elements of military and national power. Military leaders must understand how the military can best fit in or harness all elements of national power to maximize effects and then be able to translate that into a strategy the civilian policymakers can understand and approve.²⁹ To do this, the military must understand how the components of the interagency implementing those elements operate. The military's

interagency intelligence quotient can be increased in a number of ways to include: continuing interagency studies in PME, expanding the Foreign Affairs Officer (FAO) career field, and increasing participation in interagency exchange programs. At the same time, the military cannot let programs that increase awareness of the other Services and Joint operations wane since strategists must maintain a thorough understanding of all military capabilities. Some progress has been made in these areas while other areas deserve attention.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 went a long way toward increasing Joint awareness among Service members. Once considered a career “killer,” Goldwater-Nichols mandated Joint assignments and made them a requirement for promotion to flag officer. Joint Staff duty is now desired and viewed as an assignment reserved for only the best officers.³⁰ The act stated specifically, “Each officer whose name is submitted shall be among those officers considered to be the most outstanding officers of that armed force.”³¹ The act went on to specify that the duration of a Joint tour would not be less than three years for a flag officer and not less than three and a half years for officers below flag rank.³² Since its inception, however, Joint tour lengths have shortened and the assignments now qualifying for Joint credit have increased. In some cases, earning Joint credit may be just a mouse click away.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2007 amended Joint assignment provisions of Goldwater-Nichols. The 2007 legislation allows officers to gain, “...Joint experience points through deployments, exercises and other education and training.”³³ For the Air Force the new system is intended to, “...recognize a broader range of experiences for receiving Joint credit, providing the opportunity for more officers to gain

Joint qualification.”³⁴ Individuals log into a system and “self-nominate” for Joint credit and may obtain credit for assignments as far back as 1986 when Goldwater-Nichols came into being. Instead of filling a designated Joint billet, officers can receive Joint credit for assignments based on the assessment of the individual Service. The system is much more flexible, but are the Services trading Joint experience envisioned by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in order to increase the number of Joint qualified officers? As an example, US Air Force pilots flying troop transport aircraft can apply and receive Joint credit for the time they spent transporting troops into battle. Is that the extent of Joint experience our future senior leaders need? The effect of the recent change on an officer’s “Jointness” is yet to be seen, but the changes and their impacts bear watching in order to avoid diluting the value gained by in-depth Joint experience as intended by the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

While changes in the Joint assignment process may lead to questions regarding the Services pursuit of quantity over quality, the need for interagency experience is growing. Fortunately, the PME curriculum at the senior developmental education institutions has adjusted to this need. The US Army War College has incorporated interagency studies to include not only lessons but visits to agencies such as the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security. Although brief, the visit gives students exposure to some of the organizations and processes they have studied throughout the year. In addition, all senior Service colleges have student positions available for interagency partners. For example, US government agencies compete for twenty-three seats at Army War College. For the academic year 2008-2009, the positions will go to agencies such as the Department of State and Homeland Security,

the National Security Agency and the US Agency for International Development. The contribution of these individuals to the student body's understanding of interagency operations is immeasurable; however, filling the positions is not always easy. The US Army War College deputy dean acknowledged, "We had four slots for the State Department last year and they can't always give us that many. There's always someone waiting to take their place."³⁵ Although that "someone" may not be a State Department employee, the Army looks to civilian agencies first to fill the absence. In fact, the War College was recently asked how they could increase the throughput of students in the college to include increasing opportunities for interagency exchanges. The deputy dean responded that space limits them more than any other factor.³⁶

The Services should not attempt to make everyone an expert in interagency operations and civil-military relations. The exposure gained at PME provides an overview and, for many, an appropriate amount of exposure to facilitate their understanding and interoperability with other departments and agencies at home and abroad. However, a need still exists for an aggressive FAO program to augment the force with individuals specialized in area studies and who can interact and coordinate with other U.S. departments and agencies in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. In 2005, Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper announced the Air Force's new and improved FAO program. According to General Jumper prior to 2005 the Air Force's FAO program was limited and the Air Force did not "...deliberately select or train officers to develop the regional skills the Air Force needs."³⁷ The revised FAO program—now known as International Affairs Specialists—will actively develop individuals and ensure those officers are appropriately assigned in order to maximize

the benefit of their skills. According to General Jumper, "Today's security environment demands officers with international skills. The FAO program is no longer sufficient to meet our requirement...."³⁸

The US Navy is a relative newcomer in the FAO business since they did not begin a program until 1997. Today, the Navy plans to fill 400 FAO positions by 2015.³⁹ According to the Navy's Director of Strategy and Policy, Navy FAOs will work primarily with the State Department and in embassies to facilitate effective host nation relations for naval forces in the area. In addition, FAOs may be assigned to fleet commanders to, "...provide cultural expertise to assist with relations within? the fleet commander's area of responsibility."⁴⁰

The US Army retains the largest FAO population with more than 1,060 currently on active duty. For the Army, the FAO "...combines military skills with regional expertise, language competency, and military-political awareness."⁴¹ According to the FAO program director, as the Army transforms, the FAO program's importance grows. "FAOs are a critical component in establishing and maintaining contact with foreign militaries and enhancing the effectiveness of our expeditionary army."⁴² The Army plans to increase the FAO program by 3% before the end of 2012 bringing their total to 1,090.⁴³

Although still relatively small overall, the FAO and International Affairs Specialist programs provide critical augmentation to the mainstream Armed Forces. Similarly, the academic enrichment gained by students from civilian agencies attending the senior Service schools is an effective means of increasing interagency understanding among senior military leaders. There is still, however, a need for a robust assignment exchange

program between the civilian agencies and the military in order to increase even more the exposure of mainstream officers to these organizations that are involved in policy formulation and implementation. There are a limited number of exchange programs already in existence; however, there are too few slots available and the programs last too long for the military to maximize the benefits of the opportunity. Thus, it would be prudent for the military to institutionalize more liaison programs like the one in place at US Special Operations Command.

The nature of the mission at US Special Operations necessitates a vigorous exchange with a number of civilian agencies in order to maximize the effectiveness of their programs. Currently, Special Operations Command has sixty-two liaison officer positions in agencies around the globe. Officers that fill these positions pull temporary duty of four to six months which gives the officers enough time to learn the basic “ins-and-outs” of the agency. Special Operations Command officials say the shorter tour enables officers to establish relationships with their interagency partners and gain enough knowledge to be able to “speak the language” without taking them out of their primary duty for too long.⁴⁴ The shorter tours also increase the opportunities for more individuals to gain the hands-on experience in these agencies and then return to their original assignment better equipped to understand and operate in the civil-military domain.

The Clock Is Ticking

Despite the logic of these improvements, the one thing the military cannot make more of is time. Today’s military leaders require both experience and academic knowledge. How can we make the time to develop our military? Given the frustrating—

though often attempted—desire to add more requirements, the military should consider lengthening military service and increasing the minimum officer retirement tenure from 20 to 25 years.

This shift in retirement is substantiated by an increase in life expectancies, a decrease in the physical demands of the job, fiscal prudence, greater flexibility in managing the force, and perhaps most importantly, the ability to give senior officer leaders more time to acquire the competencies required to be effective partners in the civil-military relationship. As a Congressional Research Service report notes, “...modern officers simply cannot learn enough about their profession in a career of 20-plus-a-few years to master the variety of tasks and assignments they have to perform.”⁴⁵

The Officer Personnel Act (OPA) of 1947 laid the initial foundation for the military retirement system and was based on the belief that the normal military career for an officer was to be approximately 30 years of service although members could apply for retirement at 20 years if desired. The goal of the legislation was to maintain the “youth and vigor” required for military service and allowed the median retirement age to fall in the early 50’s for most military members.⁴⁶ Today, however, a 20-year retirement establishes “youth” at 40 years of age, a full ten years earlier than that envisioned by the 1947 law despite an almost eight year increase in the life expectancy of males and nine years for females in the United States since the law’s enactment.⁴⁷

While improved health care and life style changes continue to increase life expectancies, the likelihood of close, physical combat for officers decreases due to the range of weapons, use of technology versus traditional manpower, and resulting dispersion of forces on the battlefield.⁴⁸ This is not to say that stamina is not needed,

but rather that the stamina required for officers—particularly the stamina required for officers performing duties past the 20 year mark—weigh more heavily toward mental vice physical abilities.⁴⁹ In 2006, Congress passed the “John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007,” which raised the mandatory retirement age for Reserve officers by two years. The legislation allows for some Reserve officers to retain their commissions until the age of 66 while active duty officers must retire at 62.⁵⁰

Active duty military personnel retire at a significantly younger age than those in the civilian sector.⁵¹ Britain recently adopted a plan to raise the civilian retirement age from 65 to 66 in 2024 and Germany plans to increase their civilian retirement age from 65 to 67.⁵² Coupled with the increased life expectancy, the earlier military retirement results in more individuals are drawing retirement pay at an earlier age. Raising the minimum retirement tenure for officers to 25 years while maintaining the 20-year minimum for enlisted and simultaneously reducing and structuring the force appropriately for this change will result in fiscal savings. This savings can then be reinvested in military pay ensuring those personnel remaining on active duty are adequately compensated and also increasing retention of the high quality officers needed in today’s complex environment.

Extending the minimum officer retirement to 25 years would increase the overall flexibility of the Department of Defense to manage military end strengths while ensuring the officers are given adequate time to prepare for the complex challenges. An extension of the retirement age contributes to the time allowed for professional development in general and PME in particular. This additional time could be used to give officers more time to absorb knowledge or familiarity with the complex cultures the

military encounters while at the same time allowing at least some personnel additional time for more in depth study of language. A 2001 RAND study highlighted two consequences of increased tenures: (1) lengthening careers would result in fewer promotions and fewer individuals rising to the highest grades and those that are promoted will serve in that grade longer and (2) individuals would gain more depth and breadth of experience.⁵³ The choice for today's leaders should be obvious and as the RAND monograph summarized, it boils down to objectives. "If the objective is rapid movement along a career path to more important positions, then the current system accomplishes that. If the objective is to reap the benefit from having developed officers by allowing them to serve longer, then removing the limit seems best."⁵⁴ Lengthening the minimum tenure comes down to a choice between quality and quantity and in today's increasingly complex environment it is the quality of an officer that counts.

Conclusion

In 1957, Samuel Huntington defined the peculiar skill of the military officer as "...the management of violence not the act of violence itself."⁵⁵ His dictum holds true today and is made all the more complicated by the wide spectrum of operations from peace to war and beyond that the military is asked to conduct. This environment requires military leaders that can assess and understand the environment in order to create effective strategies that incorporate all elements of national power. To do so, military officers must not only be able to develop strategies, they must be able to communicate them to civilian policymakers and interagency partners around the globe. Toward this end, the Services must institute language and cultural training, demand more robust, near-continuous PME, and expand opportunities for military members to

serve with other Services and civilian agencies. These efforts will demand more from the mainstream officer in both time and dedication. Nonetheless, the investments described in this paper will improve the military's ability to develop coherent strategies in peace and conflict while improving its agility in integrating the capabilities of all armed forces and interagency partners in order to achieve the desired effects of United States policymakers.

Endnotes

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